

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A managing method for physically managing data that represents a document for eventual presentation to a user, based on said data, which comprises the steps of:

acquiring the data from an appropriate document source in a source representation,

selectively converting the data in source representation to data in destination representation, while selectively storing in a database managed data in an intermediate representation ,

first, assessing quantitative physical storage constraints associated with storing the managed data,

second, assessing quantitative physical converting constraints associated with converting the stored managed data from the source representation to the presentation representation, and

executing the converting before said storing, and/or after said storing, respectively, on a dynamic trade-off basis between said first assessment and said second assessment, while further considering one or more applicable source profiles and one or more applicable destination profiles.

2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

third, assessing the quantitative physical transfer constraints associated with transferring the managed data over a transfer facility of an applicable distributed system, and in said execution providing a further

dynamic trade-off basis through the application of the third assessment.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the document essentially relates to an image.

4. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the quantitative physical storage constraints are based on storage space availability, the quantitative physical converting constraints are based on destination delay allowability, and the quantitative physical transfer constraints are based on transfer facility availability and/or transfer duration.

5. The method of Claim 4, wherein the quantitative physical converting constraints and/or the quantitative physical transfer constraints are based on a quality-of-service metric.

6. The method of Claim 2, wherein the quantitative physical storage constraints, the quantitative physical converting constraints, and the quantitative physical transfer constraints are made comparable through assigning to the respective constraints appropriate absolute values of a cost metric.

7. The method of Claim 1, executed by consulting a rule base.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein the converting is effected through a sequence of sub-conversions to produce one or more intermediate representations which are stored in lieu of storing an eventual destination representation.

9. The method of Claim 1, wherein available storage space is optimally assigned to the storing of various documents in various representations for future user requests for image presentations.

10. The method of Claim 9, wherein coexistent storage of a particular document in a plurality of different representations is provided.

11. The method of Claim 1, wherein document data is maintained in the database, governed by one or more persistency rules.

12. The method of Claim 1, wherein document data in the database is governed by one or more garbage collection rules.

13. The method of Claim 1, wherein further image presentation is allowed in a thumbnail version.

14. The method of Claim 1, wherein a source device is substantially uniformly operated at its highest possible image presenting quality level.

15. The method of Claim 1, wherein a source device is operated at an image processing level quality that is at least co-determined by the eventual requirements associated with an intended user device and/or application.

16. The method of Claim 1, wherein an application to invoke a remote server facility is provided through a remote interface.

17. The method of Claim 1, which comprises, providing for operation with multiple users, a data consistency maintained through an appropriate locking mechanism.

18. A management system for physically managing information that represents a document for eventual presentation to a user, based on said data and provided by a destination profile, which comprises:

acquiring means for acquiring said information from an appropriate document source in a source representation,

converting means for selectively converting data in source representation to data in destination representation,

storing means for selectively storing, in a database, managed data as an intermediate item of said management system,

assessing means for assessing first quantitative physical storage constraints associated with storing said managed information, second

quantitative converting constraints associated with converting said stored data in source representation to said data in destination representation and third quantitative physical transferring constraints associated with transferring said managed data over a transfer facility,

and execution means for executing said converting before said storing, and/or after said storing and/or after said transferring, on a dynamic trade-off basis, produced by said assessing means.

19. The system of Claim 18 comprising one or more source facilities, and one or more destination facilities linked with each other through a transfer facility for the physical managing of information contained in a data base facility and a server facility.

20. A computer program containing a set of instructions which, when used in a general-purpose computer, performs the managing method of Claim 1.